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ABSTRACT

This study examined the underlying factor structure of the Motivation Orientation Scale (MOS), determining its degree of consistency across two distinct cultures and identifying variables affecting students' motivation in learning a second language. The study investigated how intention theory with its three motivation orientations, and Gardner's instrumental-integrative model, could cross different cultures in the area of second language learning. Participants were 584 college freshmen from three Taiwanese universities and students enrolled in Spanish classes at a rural Pennsylvania university. Taiwanese students completed the MOS for English as a Foreign Language (EFL), while U.S. students completed the MOS for Spanish as a Second Language (SSL). Results indicated that Taiwanese students had different motivation for learning EFL than did U.S. students learning SSL. The results suggest that the MOS should be revised in order to better fit respondents' cultural backgrounds. The MOS is appended. (Contains 23 references.) (SM)

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A Cross-Cultural Study of the Motivation of Students Learning a Second Language

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A Cross-Cultural Study of the Motivation of Students Learning a Second Language

A. Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this study lies in examining the underlying factor structure of the "Motivation Orientation Scale" (MOS), to determine its degree of consistency across two distinct cultures. Further comparison of variables that affect students' motivation in learning a second language will also be identified. Intentional theory of motivation emphasizes the task, ego, and work-avoidance orientations (Nicholls, 1984), which were tested to cross different subject domains (Duda & Nicholls, 1992). However, in the field of second language acquisition (SLA), Gardner (1985, p. 65) emphasized that motivation – such as instrumental and integrative orientations – and attitude determine the extent to which individuals will actively involve in learning the target language.

The current study intends to investigate how intentional theory with its three motivation orientations, and Gardner's instrumental- integrative model can cross different cultures in the area of second language acquisition.

B. Theoretical Framework

Intentional Theory of Motivation

From the intentional perspective of achievement motivation, Nicholls and colleagues (Nicholls, 1984; Nicholls, Patashnick, & Nolen, 1985; Nicholls, 1992) postulated that students' motivation orientation is their predisposition to seek certain types of experience and the related beliefs about the causes of success; this framework is intended to be generalized across different fields.

Studies based on intentional theory have focused on three motivation orientations: task orientation, ego orientation, and work avoidance. Task orientation has to do with one's purpose of gaining knowledge, working one's best and collaborating with others. On the other hand, ego orientation has to do with one's purpose of studying to demonstrate superior ability over others. Another dimension, work-avoidance, has also been identified which has to do with making least amount of effort to get away with it.

Empirical studies supporting the three orientations included students of various age groups (Nicholls, et al., 1985; Nicholls, Cobb, Wood, and Yackel, 1990; Thorkildsen & Nicholls, 1998). Results generally found that a greater personal concern with learning and understanding was significantly related to the belief that success is attributed to interest, effort (Thorkildsen & Nicholls, 1998), trying to understand (Nicholls, et al., 1985), and cooperation with peers (Nicholls, et al., 1990). Furthermore, students who seek to be more able than others (i.e., more ego oriented) were more likely to believe that schooling leads to wealth and status (Nicholls et al., 1985), and that competitiveness causes success (Thorkildsen & Nicholls, 1998).

A cross-domain study (Duda and Nicholls, 1992) found that student's motivation orientation can be generalized across academic work and sports. This study associating personal goals and beliefs about the causes of success found that the students' ego orientation in

schoolwork and that in sports were highly correlated and task orientation in both schoolwork and sports were also significantly related.

Gardner's socio-psychological model.

In the area of second language acquisition, students learn a language not simply to understand it, to accomplish a task, or to appear more able than others; they learn a second/foreign language for instrumental reasons, such as, for career promotion (Dornyei, 1990; Gardner, 1985) or integrative reasons, e.g., making friends with the people who speak the language (Oxford & Shearin, 1994). Such social-educational model of language learning, developed by Gardner and Lambert (1959, 1972) postulated that there are two major motivation orientations for language learning: integrative and instrumental. Integrative motivation is identified with positive attitudes toward the target language group and potential for integrating into that group, or at least an interest in meeting and interacting with members of the group. Instrumental orientation refers to more functional reasons for learning a language, such as to pass a required examination or to get a better job or promotion.

Early empirical studies have shown that integrative motivation is important for successful acquisition of a second language (Gardner, 1972; Lambert, Gardner, Barik, & Tunstall, 1972) and also important for the intention to continue to study the language (Clement, Gardner, & Smythe, 1977), and that instrumental orientation did not seem to relate to successful language learning (Gardner, 1979; Lambert et al., 1972). Studies in 1980s, however, found that integrative motivation may not be the strongest predictor for language learning (Gardner, 1988; Gardner & McIntyre, 1991; Au, 1988). Furthermore, studies in the 90s have suggested that motivation for learning a second language may not be so simple as integrative-instrumental dichotomy; other motivation components can also play important role: desire for knowledge, a new challenge, need for achievement (Dornyei, 1990, 1994a, 1994b), intellectual stimulation, and personal challenge (Oxford & Shearin, 1994).

C. Method

Participants:

1. A total of 584 freshmen from three universities in Taiwan participated in the study.
2. Students enrolled in Spanish classes in the Fall 2001, Spring 2002 and Summer 2002 semester at a rural university in Pennsylvania USA participated in the study.

Instrument:

The "Motivation Orientation Scale" (MOS): For English as a Foreign Language" (EFL) is a Likert-type scale, including twenty items in five broad categories: Task Orientation, Ego Orientation, Work Avoidance, Integrative Orientation and Instrumental Orientation. Task, Ego, Work avoidance items were adapted from the Motivation Orientation Scale (MOS, in Nicholls et al., 1985 and Nicholls, 1989); while items in the Integrative and Instrumental Orientations were adapted from the orientation index created by

Lambert et al. (1972). Alpha coefficients for task, ego, work-avoidance are .79, .76, and .80, respectively, in Nolen (1988); and .58, .89, and .76, respectively, in Chen (1999). For integrative and instrumental orientation, they are .71 and .53, respectively in Chen (1999). The "Motivation Orientation Scale" (MOS): For Spanish as a Second Language" (SSL) was slightly modified from the MOS for EFL. (See Appendix)

Procedures:

Taiwan study:

The MOS for EFL was translated into Chinese, then back-translated into English to ensure the meanings for each item in both versions were as synonymous as possible. Also a panel of three professionals in English as a second/foreign language reviewed the scale for face validity to ensure agreement on the five subcategories: Task Orientation, Ego Orientation, Work Avoidance, Integrative Orientation and Instrumental Orientation.

This survey was completed by 584 college freshmen compiled from three universities in Taiwan.

American study:

The MOS for SSL was administered to a total of 321 students attending a rural American university.

Research questions:

This study intends to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the underlying dimensionality of the MOS in both countries?
2. Is the underlying factor structure consistent over Taiwan and American group?
3. Will students from distinct cultural groups demonstrate similar task, ego, work-avoidance orientations, integrative and instrumental orientations?

Results

Since the previous study (Chen, 1999) suggested 5 factors of the MOS, confirmatory factor analysis using data from the American study and from Taiwanese data was performed to examine whether the MOS structure was consistent with the previous study. The results did not confirm the suggested 5-factor model ($N=321$, $df=160$, $\chi^2=791.65$, $RMSEA=0.11$, $GFI=0.81$, $AGFI=0.75$, $NFI=0.73$, $NNFI=0.72$, $CFI=0.77$, $CN=83.68$) in American data. It was also not confirmed in Taiwanese data ($N=584$, $df=160$, $\chi^2=1424.08$, $RMSEA=0.13$, $GFI=0.78$, $AGFI=0.71$, $NFI=0.72$, $NNFI=0.69$, $CFI=0.74$, $CN=84.73$).

Internal consistency reliability was performed to test the correlation among items for each factor. All of the internal consistency reliabilities were above 0.7 in both data except Task and Instrumental factor.

Since the confirmatory factor analysis did not confirm the suggested model from the previous study, the number and nature of dimensions measured by the MOS were identified through an exploratory factor analysis. Two separate analyses using Taiwan study data and American data were performed. Factors were extracted using a principal component analysis maximum likelihood method. The exploratory factor analysis suggested a 5-factor model for both data. In both Taiwanese and American data the first five factors accounted for fifty-nine percent of the total variance. However, after examining and comparing the factor pattern matrices for the five factor solution, some items were problematic. Question 11 and 15 were the single item as one factor in Taiwanese data. By carefully examining the items, these two items were culturally biased and thus eliminated from further analyses. Questions 5 and 8 appeared to load on a separate factor in both data. In addition, in American data, questions 13 and 17 were loaded on one factor and questions 16 and questions 19 were on another factor, although these 4 items were supposed to measure Integrative Orientation.

Based on the factor structure of both data and the careful examination of the items, the items were roughly clustered into categories which we have named: Task(questions 5 and 8), Ego/work avoidance (questions 1,2,3,4,6,7,9,10,and 12), Integrative orientation (questions 13,14,17, and 20) and Instrumental orientation (questions 16, 18, and 19). Further analyses were performed using this suggested 4-factor model.

ANOVA was used to examine the group differences. The results indicated that all of the factors were statistically significant. The motivation of Taiwanese students to study English as a second language was different from the American students study Spanish as a second language across all 4 orientations.

Conclusion

The motivation of the students learning a second language was explored in this study. Results showed that students in Taiwan have different motivation learning English as a second language than the students in America learning Spanish as a second language. The instrument was originally developed to include 5 different orientations (task, ego, work-avoidance, integrative, and instrumental). However, after carefully examining the factor structure and the correlation among the factors, four factors were more suitable. We combined the ego and work-avoidance as one factor since the correlation is high between the two factors. (.99 in Taiwanese study and .72 in American study). Perhaps, some items which classified as work- avoidance could also be Ego-related. For example, Question number 6: I don't have to work hard in finishing assignments, could also interpreted as Ego orientation. Question 11: I don't do homework yet I get away with it, was very vague. It could be interpreted as work- avoidance or could be something else. In addition, some items on the instrument may be interpreted differently based on the cultural backgrounds of the subjects. For example, item 15 reads: A person with good Spanish ability is highly recognized in our society. In the Taiwanese study, the structure of the question is similar, except that the word English was substituted for the word Spanish. In Taiwan, learning English as the second language is most popular and increasingly essential for

individuals in any discipline. Taiwanese people who can speak English fluently are highly recognized. In America, Spanish is one of the second languages that is functional, but not nearly as essential for Americans, when compared with Taiwanese individuals learning English. Therefore, some items were eliminated and two factors were combined to further examine the different orientation of the motivation across the two countries.

The motivation of the students learning English as a second language in Taiwan is different from the motivation of the students learning Spanish as a second language in America. Perhaps the items in the instrument were interpreted differently. As we mentioned above, there were items either vague in meaning or culturally biased. It may also be due to the participants' bias. In Taiwan study, the participants were the freshmen in college in general while in American study, the participants were the students who took the Spanish class for credit. It may have resulted in the difference of the instrumental and the integrative orientation. In addition, since current data showed the original ego items and work-avoidance items loaded in one single factor, it probably suggested that those who are orientated toward performing better than others (ego orientation) also work hard only to show superiority to others, otherwise, they just want to make least amount of effort in order to get away with the task (work avoidance). Ego orientation is closely related to work avoidance.

In conclusion, the current study suggested that the instrument that was used to compare the students' motivation in different culture be revised. Some items should be eliminated or re-phrased to better fit the culture background of the participants. It was also suggested that a more comparable group of subjects should be sampled in the future study. Different culture exhibits different orientation in students' learning a second language. This study also provided information to support insights that demonstrate the potential to increase instructional effectiveness and student success in university foreign language programs.

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Appendix

Motivation Orientation Scale: For Spanish as a Foreign Language (MOLLS for SFL, version 2.3)

The following items are descriptions about people learning Spanish. Please indicate how much you think each description applies to you.

5 indicates **Strongly Agree** 4 indicates **Agree** 3 indicates **Neutral**

2 indicates **Disagree** 1 indicates **Strongly Disagree**

Under the following situation, you feel you have had a really successful day in school.

I feel most successful if

1. (t1) What I learn in Spanish motivates me to know more.
2. (t2) I have learned a lot more than I used to be.
3. (e1) My performance is better than others.
4. (w1) The Spanish exam is very easy.
5. (t3) My friends and I help each other working on problems and assignments.
6. (w2) I don't have to work hard in finishing assignments.
7. (e2) My Spanish score is higher than others.
8. (t4) I finish an assignment by working hard.
9. (e3) I show others my Spanish is good.
10. (w3) The Spanish assignment is easy.
11. (w4) I don't do homework yet I get away with it.
12. (e4) I am the only one who can answer the teacher's questions in Spanish.

Why are you learning Spanish?

I am learning Spanish because.....

13. (g4) I want to be like the Spanish-speaking people
14. (g1) Learning Spanish enables me to make friends with Spanish-speaking people.
15. (i1) A person with good Spanish ability is highly recognized in our society.
16. (i2) Spanish credits are required.
17. (g2) I want to know more of the culture of Spanish-speaking countries.
18. (i3) I want to pass related examinations, such as teacher license exams, etc.
19. (i4) Good Spanish proficiency will increase job opportunities.
20. (g3) So one day I can live at an Spanish-speaking country.

t: task orientation; w: work-avoidance; e: ego orientation; i: instrumental orientation;
g: integrative orientation

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Learning a Second Language
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Table 1: Internal Consistency Reliability of Original 5 Orientation Factor

Orientation	Taiwan study N=584	American study N=321
Task	.5805	.5712
Ego	.8902	.8227
Work-Avoidance	.7699	.7686
Integrative	.7084	.7658
Instrumental	.5259	.2520

Table 2 : Factor Pattern Matrix, and Correlation Coefficients for a Principal Components

Analysis for both Taiwan and American Studies

		Tai	wan	stu	dy	Am	eri	can	stu	dy
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
T1	.47	.18	-.30	.13	-.27	.29	.28	.24	.58	-.22
T2	.47	-.06	-.38	.39	-.25	.12	.13	.18	.59	.00
E1	.84	-.14	-.09	-.05	-.09	.68	-.07	.42	.11	-.12
W1	.64	-.25	.27	-.13	.29	.82	.09	-.02	.09	.03
T3	.18	-.01	-.51	.23	.57	-.02	.15	.57	.10	.14
W2	.58	-.25	.33	-.04	.10	.82	.00	-.09	-.02	.00
E2	.84	-.10	-.03	-.00	-.07	.74	.00	.33	.16	-.13
T4	.38	.11	-.50	.20	.45	-.21	.11	.58	.41	.14
E3	.84	-.07	-.06	-.00	-.17	.49	.17	.64	.12	.03
W3	.68	-.22	.29	-.09	.31	.83	.05	-.16	.03	.09
W4	.36	-.29	.57	-.14	-.02	.37	.27	.09	-.56	.11
E4	.73	-.15	-.12	.02	-.26	.54	.09	.51	-.26	-.07
G1	.38	.54	-.12	-.22	-.11	-.07	.74	.08	-.02	-.03
I1	.16	.51	.33	.41	-.11	.01	.78	.16	-.01	.04
I2	-.15	-.06	.49	.54	.22	.12	.67	-.06	.16	.02
G2	.25	.60	-.08	-.37	.15	-.02	-.25	.08	-.12	.71
G3	.17	.66	.13	-.22	.13	.00	.62	.27	.27	.07
I3	.15	.44	.29	.21	-.00	.00	.15	.10	.13	.72
G4	.23	.64	-.03	-.27	.03	.17	.25	-.11	.60	.27
I4	.15	.54	.24	.38	-.02	.09	.74	.06	.08	-.16

Table 3: ANOVA of Four Factor by country

	F	Significant
Task orientation	6.987	.008
Ego / Work Avoidance	6.479	.011
Integrative orientation	748.229	.000
Instrumental orientation	45.612	.000



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